

SUPER DTP – Year 3 Call for PhD Studentship proposals

The Scottish Universities Partnership for Environmental Research Doctoral Training Partnership (SUPER DTP) is pleased to announce its third call for PhD studentship proposals.

The SUPER DTP addresses an interdisciplinary "*catchment to coast*" research portfolio, supporting the holistic study of the ecological dynamics of systems from headland rivers and catchments through lowland regions and riparian systems to estuarine and coastal waters and marine ecosystems.

The three themes under the SUPER "Catchment to Coast" umbrella are:

Environmental Dynamics

Hydrology
Sedimentology
Coastal Processes
Erosion Control
Ecosystem Engineering
River Ecology
Flood Management

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function

Ecosystem services
Ecology and Conservation

Challenged Ecosystems

Climate
Multiple Stressors
Resilience
Resource Management
Societal Well-being
Legacy Waste

The third call for proposals under the SUPER DTP remains broad in scope, and **we invite applications across the full SUPER remit**, which embraces terrestrial, freshwater, and all marine habitats. This includes, but is not limited to, studies of: ecology; biodiversity; biological invasions; ecosystem change; environmental physics and chemistry; modelling; mechanistic studies; social and economic studies; and emerging issues.

We would particularly welcome applications covering:

- The physical sciences
- Socio-economic aspects of the SUPER remit
- Freshwater, terrestrial and truly-catchment wide projects
- Projects that address research needs of policy delivery bodies
- Contributions to post-COVID-19 green-recovery

Non-HEI organisations have been invited to suggest areas of research that they may, *in principle*, be willing to support. This information will be published on the SUPER DTP webpage.

You may also find it useful to view the project title of proposals funded under the SUPER DTP in [Year 1](#) and in [Year 2](#).

Basic Terms and Conditions

All projects must have two suitably qualified supervisors (i.e. have previous supervisory experience) from different partner HEI institutions. The supervisor from the HEI hosting the student will be recognised as the primary supervisor. Primary HEI supervisors without a past record of successful PhD completion must appoint an experienced second HEI supervisor from the host HEI. In which case there would be three supervisors. Additional supervisors can also be appointed from non-HEI collaborative partners (i.e. SNH, Marine Scotland etc). Hypothetical combinations of supervisors can be seen below in Table 1.

Table 1: Possible combinations of supervisors under the SUPER DTP structure

	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Standard inexperienced</u>	<u>Collaborative</u>	<u>Collaborative inexperienced</u>
Supervisor 1	HEI 1	HEI 1 inexperienced	HEI 1	HEI 1 inexperienced
Supervisor 2	HEI 2	HEI 1 experienced	HEI 2	HEI 1 experienced
Supervisor 3	Optional	HEI 2	Collaborative partner	HEI 2
Supervisor 4+	Optional	Optional	Optional	Collaborative partner

Inexperienced applicants should confirm their eligibility to formally supervise PhD students with their own institutions before they apply.

A Principal Investigator (PI) can submit more than one proposal but in the event that both are ranked as supportable only the highest ranked will be funded.

A PI who submits a proposal(s) as first supervisor may also be involved as secondary/tertiary supervisor in other proposals in the same call round.

Successful primary supervisors of the SUPER DTP year 2 call will not be eligible to submit a proposal as a primary supervisor in this third call. They may be secondary supervisors in this call or wait and submit as a primary supervisor in the fourth call. Successful primary supervisors of the SUPER DTP first call are eligible to submit a proposal as a primary supervisor in this round.

Applications must be submitted by the primary supervisor. Student-initiated proposals are welcome but they must be submitted by their prospective supervisor(s).

Where possible, students should be jointly registered and FTEs allocated proportionately.

All students will be expected to participate in two main cohort building events per year; the Annual Science Meeting and the Annual Retreat. This is not optional.

All students must register for the Post Graduate Professional Researcher Certificate (PG Cert.).

Students are expected to select further training opportunities relevant to their respective interests and that may contribute to the PG Cert. The individual Research Training & Support Grant (RTSG) awards will help support this.

All studentship positions must be confirmed by **the UKRI Universal Acceptance Date (17th March 2021)**. If the studentship is not filled by this date, then the position may be re-advertised to secure an

appointment within a further three months. Failure to recruit in this timeframe will result in the studentship being re-allocated.

SUPER offers PhD studentships for 3.5 years (42 months) including stipend and fees at the RCUK rate (2021/22 rates to be announced). Part-time study is also available. The SUPER DTP studentships are regulated by [RCUK Terms and Conditions](#).

The Research & Training Support Grant (RTSG) will be allocated to each student but a proportion is expected to be used to support PG Cert training. Details regarding the expected allocations will be made available to supervisors and students prior to the start of the studentship.

The host institution is required to contribute 33% of the total cost of the studentship. Where non-HEI partners are involved in a project, they must also contribute 33% of the total cost. The total cost is based on 4 years. The operational costs and student registration fees for the DTP Graduate School and PG Cert will be derived from the RCUK studentship award as agreed by the DTP Partners.

CASE Award studentships are encouraged and welcome but they must be accompanied by a letter confirming the *in principle* commitment of the CASE partner. CASE partners are required to supplement the studentship and thus enhance the research project, by:

- paying at least £1,000 per year to the lead research organisation to supplement the RTSG for the duration of the studentship
- in addition to the cash contribution above, meeting the extra expenses (such as travel and subsistence) incurred by the student visiting and working in the CASE establishment(s)
- contributing in cash or in kind towards necessary materials whilst the student is based at the CASE partner establishment(s).

Proposals will be assessed by a panel of reviewers and ranked according to:

- Relevance - The application is directly relevant to the provision of SUPER science and the "catchment to coast" theme
- Quality - The application represents research of the highest scientific quality with clearly stated objectives
- Collaboration - Evidence is provided that the project will involve a period of research outside of the primary HEI
- Approach - The proposal sets out an approach which is both logical and appropriate to address the stated objectives
- Impact - Evidence is provided that this project will deliver significant outcomes and impact
- Feasibility - The planning and project management of the proposed research project are justified and would be feasible and achievable for a student within 3.5 years
- Student focus and PG Cert output – Care has been taken to construct a project that will serve the needs of a student and allow them to develop specific research and transferable skills

Table 2 below was submitted as part of the bid to NERC and you may find this useful if you are looking for partners.

Table 2: List of end-users, non-HEI and HEI partners

Organisation	CASE Award Partner	Collaborating Partner	Sector	Organisation	CASE Award Partner	Collaborating Partner	Sector
Marine Scotland	P	P		James Hutton Institute	P		
Scottish Natural Heritage	P	P		Biostatistics Scotland (BioSS)		P	
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	P	P		Centre of Expertise for Waters	P	P	
Food Standards Scotland	P			Marine Scotland Science	P	P	
Joint Nature Conservation Committee	P			Centre for Ecology and Hydrology		P	
Marine Management Organisation	P			St Abbs Marine Laboratory	P	P	
UK Hydrographic Office	P			Environment and Climate Change Canada		P	
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	P	P		Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA)		P	
Northern Lighthouse Board		P		CSIR, Water Research Institute, Ghana		P	
Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre	P	P		Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, India		P	
DataLab Innovation Centre	P	P		WorldFish Center, Penang		P	
Oil and Gas Innovation Centre	P	P		Zejiang Ocean University, China		P	
Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre	P	P		City University Hongkong, China		P	
CENSIS - Sensor Technology Innovation Centre	P	P		Nante University, France		P	
Fisheries Innovation Scotland	P	P		Hellenic Center for Marine Research (HCMR), Crete		P	
Institute of Marine Engineering Science and Technology	P	P		Wageningen University, Netherlands		P	
Society of Underwater Technology	P	P		ASPEA, Portugal		P	
Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum	P	P		Concepcion University, Chile		P	
Offshore Renewables Joint Industry Partnership	P	P		Szent Istvan University, Hungary		P	
Forth Fisheries Forum		P		University of Bergen, Norway		P	
Fisheries Management Scotland	P	P		Akvaplan-Niva, Norway		P	
Atlantic Salmon Trust	P	P					
European Marine Board	P	P					

Note: This selection of partners represents only a proportion of the potential collaborating partner network across the SUPER DTP partnership
P = Collaborating Partner that will act as a conduit to their respective industry networks

Key: Government/Regulator
Industry
NGO
Research

Application Process

- Application forms and further information can be downloaded from: <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/how-to-apply/>
- Applications should be submitted to superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk. The deadline for application submission is **17:00 GMT Monday 14th September 2020**.
- Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Anticipated date for notification of outcome of proposal assessment: W/C 9th November 2020.
- **Successful proposal applicants will be expected to advertise, interview and be in a position to appoint a student by the UKRI Universal Acceptance Date (17th March 2021).**

The SUPER partners are St Andrews University (lead), Aberdeen University, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, the University of the Highlands & Islands, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde & the University of the West of Scotland.

Check out the website at <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>